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ABSTRACT

The administrative structures of three Louisiana elementary schools were examined in order to determine the relationship between individual teacher personality and organizational climate of the institution. The Rokeach Scale and the Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire were used. A total of 92 teachers participated in the study. Results indicated no correlation between teacher openness and organizational climate. (LH)

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OPENNESS IN TEACHER PERSONALITY AND ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE

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OPENNESS IN TEACHER PERSONALITY AND ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE

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It has long been believed that openness of personality is a desirable trait among teachers, as reported by Elliott (1977), Oppenheimer (1967), Meyer (1968) and others.

An organization, being composed of human personalities, develops traits that might be compared to individual traits. Among these traits are the elements of openness of the "organizational climate", which has been defined by Halpin (1966) as the "personality of an organization...". The "organization" in the present study was the administrative structure, headed by a principal, in three elementary schools.

Since both the individual teachers and the organization itself have similar properties in terms of personality, a paradigm was developed to attempt to determine what relationship exists between the degree of teacher openness and the degree of organizational openness. The study centered upon the comparison of three sets of score values which indicated a measure of openness of teacher personality, and three similar sets of score values which indicated a measure of openness of school organizational climate.

Personality characteristics have been examined and measured from many perspectives and in many dimensions, including the element of dogmatism or closed-mindedness. Rokeach (1960) described the concept of dogmatism as the opposite of openness, on a continuum from closed to open, and developed an instrument to measure such an element of personality, the Rokeach Scale.

The organizational climate of schools has also been observed and measured. In the early 1960's Halpin and his associates developed an instrument to measure the organizational climate of schools, known as the Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire, Halpin (1966). The study was based upon an examination of similar characteristics among teachers and school climates, as measured by the two instruments.

METHODOLOGY

The sample for the study consisted of the teaching faculties in three elementary schools in a large suburban public school district in metropolitan New Orleans, Louisiana. Each school was considered as a separate study, duplicated by identical research in the other two schools. A total of 92 teachers participated in the study. Two instruments were administered to the teaching faculties of each school. The Rokeach Scale, by Rokeach, was used to derive a measured value of the teacher personality, and the Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire (OCDQ), by Halpin, was used to measure the degree of openness of the school organizational climate. Teacher personalities and school organizational climates were assigned a score value representing the degree of openness, rather than being classified as open or closed. Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients and regression slopes were calculated from the data generated from each of the three schools.

Table 1 indicates the size of the school faculty and the percentage of participation.

TABLE 1
SCHOOLS IN STUDY, FACULTY SIZE AND
PERCENTAGE OF PARTICIPATION

	School 1	School 2	School 3
Total Faculty	37	42	41
Completed Instruments	28	31	33
Percentage of Participation	75.7	73.8	80.5

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Contrary to the expectations of the researchers, no significant relationships were found between the degree of openness of teacher personality and the degree of openness of school organizational climate in any of the three schools studied. The scores in the sample were widely scattered, with no clearly defined patterns of linearity. The null hypothesis was not rejected, using the F Test at the .05 alpha level.

The correlational values are illustrated in Table 2.

TABLE 2
CALCULATED VALUES OF COEFFICIENT OF CORRELATION r

	School 1	School 2	School 3
Degrees of Freedom	25	30	30
Calculated Value of r	-0.28	-0.02	-0.03

All of the coefficients of correlation were found to be non-significant, at the .05 alpha level.

The findings of the study indicate that there is no relationship between the degree of openness of teacher personality, as measured by the Rokeach Scale, and the degree of openness of the school organizational climate, as measured by the OCDQ, limited to the schools studied. Previous findings that individual personalities and school climates can be measured were supported.

The researchers believe that the instrument used to measure the degree of openness of teacher personality may have affected the outcome of the study. The Rokeach Scale has been used to measure teacher personality by Weiss (1970), Null (1971), and Barfield and Burlingame (1974). The instrument has also been used in personality studies not related to teachers, as indicated by a review of the Xerox Corp. (1978) dissertation abstracts. The OCDQ, on the other hand, has been designed for a specific measure, the degree of openness of a school organizational climate. The two instruments might measure different qualities of openness. Different results might be obtained if an instrument were developed and used that was specifically designed to measure the personality characteristics of teachers.

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